International Bible Lesson
International Bible Study Commentary
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Thankful To Follow Christ
1 Peter 1:1–12

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:6-7—ESV).

Peter not only gives us reasons to follow Jesus, but he also gives us reasons to rejoice that we are following Jesus. His first chapter could be read and studied for several weeks, but we can only think briefly about some of the ways Jesus has shown and continues to show the Father's love and His great love for us.

Peter tells us that the Spirit of Christ in the Hebrew prophets spoke about the grace and salvation Jesus would bring to us by His sufferings and the glories that would follow. Because Christ came, suffered, died, and rose from the dead, by the great mercy of God we can be born again to a living hope in God and the future. Because our hope comes from the risen Christ, we enjoy the grace and peace of God that He gives us in abundance each day no matter what each day brings.

We know with certainty that if we suffer various trials, even as Christ did Himself, they are necessary. We may not know why, but if these trials and tests were not necessary for reasons God alone knows, we would not be going through them. We can even rejoice because in the scope of eternity these times of trial are only for a little while, and they will end in our good and perhaps the good of others.

Because we know that God loves us, we also know that no matter what we may suffer, we have an inheritance in heaven, a gift from God. And in heaven our inheritance is imperishable, undefiled, unfading, and it will never be taken from us. The genuineness of our faith shown in our trials will result in praise, glory, and honor when Christ visibly reveals Himself on earth.

From all that Christ has done for us and does for us each day, from truths that we learn from our Bible study and our own experience, we love Christ, we believe in Christ, and we rejoice with joy in Christ. Peter describes our joy as "inexpressible and filled with glory." As we continue in the faith that we have been given by the grace of Jesus, we will obtain not only the salvation of our souls but also the inheritance that God will give us throughout all eternity.

As we study the Letter of Peter, the Holy Spirit that enabled Peter to preach the good news about Jesus will personally reveal to us the good news we need to hear from this written Word of God. We will see how God can set us apart each day for opportunities to show our love for Him, obey Him, serve Him, and bring some blessings of His to others. Because Jesus Christ has risen and lives in His faithful followers, He can work through us. Living in and through us, Jesus Christ can help those who also need the living hope that comes from following Him, the hope that we once needed and in which we now rejoice and give thanks.

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